



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

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### MEDIA RELEASE

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### Australia's big picture: Census highlights the changes in Australian society

According to the 2006 Census of Population and Housing, Australia's population is becoming older and family structures are changing. There have also been some substantial changes in home ownership, with Australian households more likely to be purchasing their own home, compared to the 1996 Census.

The median age of Australians was 37 years in 2006, compared to 34 years in 1996. Since 1996, the proportion of the population aged 65 years and over has increased from 12.1% to 13.3%, and the proportion of children aged 0–14 years has decreased from 21.6% to 19.8%.

Females outnumbered males in 2006 – for every 100 females there were 97 males.

People identifying as being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origins increased from 352,970 (2.0% of the population) to 455,026 (2.3%) from 1996 to 2006. (*See fact sheet Census shows increase in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population for further information*).

In 2006, the proportion of people reported as being born overseas remained unchanged since 1996 (22%). English was the only language spoken at home for 78% of the population, a decrease from 82% in 1996. The most common languages spoken at home other than English in 2006 were Italian (1.6%) and Greek (1.3%). Since 1996, these proportions have declined slightly (from 2.1% and 1.5% respectively). Of the top ten languages spoken at home, the biggest increase from 1996 to 2006 was for Mandarin, up from 0.5% to 1.1%.

Of the 7,596,185 households counted in 2006, 67% were family households, a decrease from 71% in 1996. From 1996 to 2006, lone person households increased from 22% to 23%. Group households decreased over this time from 4.1% to 3.7%.

The total number of families counted in 2006 was 5,219,168, an increase of 12% (from 4,655,919) since 1996. From 1996 to 2006, couple families with children decreased from 50% to 45% of all families. Over this time, couple families without children increased from 34% to 37% and one parent families increased from 14.5% to 15.8% of families.

The median household income range in 2006 was \$1000–\$1199 per week. This is higher than the 1996 median of \$600–\$699 per week; in 2006 dollars this was \$778–\$906 per week.

The number of dwellings recorded in the 2006 Census was 8,446,726, an increase of 1,251,557 (17.4%). Of these, 90% were occupied private dwellings, 9.8% were unoccupied private dwellings and 0.2% were non-private dwellings.

In 2006, 33% of occupied private dwellings were fully owned, 32% were being purchased, and 27% were being rented. The biggest change since 1996 has been the rise in the proportion of

dwellings being purchased, up from 25%. This has been countered by a decline in outright home ownership, down from 41%. In 2006, the median monthly housing loan repayment of the 2,448,212 occupied private dwellings being purchased was \$1300, up from \$780 (\$1011 in 2006 dollars) since 1996. The median weekly rent of the 2,063,947 occupied private dwellings being rented was \$190.

*These and other Census topics are covered in more detail in other media fact sheets in this series.*

NB: The figures in this fact sheet exclude overseas visitors. Where an answer to a question has not been provided (i.e. not stated) these occurrences form a separate category in the data and therefore some percentages do not total to 100%.

Source: ABS 2006 Census.

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